



ONE VIRGINIA NEWS

Inclusive Excellence in the Commonwealth

NEW THIS MONTH

May/June 2021

ONE VIRGINIA NEWS

Virginia launches first-in-the-nation Equity Dashboards.

SUCCESS STORIES

Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed strives to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion.

DE&I RESOURCES

How does Virginia rank in diversity, equity, and inclusion?

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

Meet Virginia's Equity Leadership Taskforce.

INTRODUCTION

We are proud to announce the launch of the Equity Dashboards. This month, *ONE Virginia News* will focus on the first-in-the-nation dashboards devoted to measuring diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) efforts across the state. Through these dashboards, Virginia's leadership will serve as a guidepost for leaders in public and private sectors to close equity gaps to improve the Commonwealth's access to inclusive resources.

The *ONE Virginia Plan* outlines the steps needed to increase DE&I across 100 state agencies in the Commonwealth and public institutions of higher education. The Equity Dashboards are data-driven tools that measure the progress Virginia is making across our COVID-19 response and recovery programs. They also serve as a transparent assessment of social determinants of health and other factors contributing to health equity.

Continue reading to discover how the *ONE Virginia Plan* and the Equity Dashboards will reshape our approach to create collective impact, sustainable change, innovation, and productivity across the Commonwealth.

ONE VIRGINIA NEWS

The Equity Dashboards are providing a snapshot of Virginia's equity initiatives in action.

Virginia is the first state in the nation to launch the Equity Dashboards. This data-driven approach to operationalizing equity in the state allows us to establish and maintain diversity, equity, and inclusion within the Commonwealth and serves as an exemplar for all states to follow.

When the Commonwealth of Virginia passed [House Joint Resolution 537](#), which declared racism as a public health crisis, it set in motion the actions needed to confront systemic racism in Virginia. This groundbreaking resolution stated the social, economic, education, and health-related initiatives offered by the Commonwealth of Virginia must be built on a foundation of equity. In order to operationalize and sustain DE&I, the Commonwealth passed [Virginia Code Section 2.2-435.12](#), which requires Virginia's first-ever Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Janice Underwood, to conduct an equity assessment.

In response, the Commonwealth has developed the Equity Dashboards: Equity-in-Action and Equity-at-a-Glance. These dashboards represent Virginia's leadership in equity and serve as a call to action for leaders to continue to close the gaps to improve Virginians' access to resources. The **Equity-in-Action** dashboard is a snapshot of the progress Virginia has made across our COVID-19 response and recovery programs and other initiatives that advance the equitable distribution of resources and services. The **Equity-at-a-Glance** dashboard is a transparent assessment of social determinants of health and other factors contributing to health equity.

Learn more about the Equity Dashboards [here](#).

SUCCESS STORIES

Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed strives to increase DE&I.

With the statewide launch of the ONE Virginia Plan, Harrisonburg Mayor Deanna Reed has fully embraced the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's pilot program to increase DE&I in the city of Harrisonburg.



Mayor Reed was sworn into office for Harrisonburg City Council on January 3, 2017, and later selected by her fellow council members as mayor, making her the first African American female mayor in Harrisonburg's history. In 2019, Mayor Reed was selected by her colleagues to serve a second term. She is no stranger to Harrisonburg and its people. She is a native of the city and a proven leader, working to positively impact the lives of those in the community.

Through Mayor Reed's "Mask Up Harrisonburg" initiative, the City of Harrisonburg has provided thousands of masks and other COVID-19 resources to community members throughout the pandemic. More than 3,400 masks have been donated so far.

Members of Harrisonburg's Fire Department visited homes throughout the city to place care kits at people's doors in multiple neighborhoods. They delivered roughly 600 packages, each including masks, hand sanitizer, and COVID-19 awareness materials printed in multiple languages. In addition, thousands of care kits, provided through a pilot program with the city and the state's COVID-19 Health Equity Working Group (HEWG), were distributed.

Mayor Reed continues to work closely with Dr. Janice Underwood and Virginia Governor Ralph Northam to implement the "Mask Up Harrisonburg" initiative for the city's underserved neighborhoods. Mayor Reed has been instrumental in fully embracing the health equity pilot program to reshape Harrisonburg.

In addition, hundreds of masks were made available on Harrisonburg's Department of Public Transportation buses to support riders who were required to wear masks under Governor Northam's mask mandate.

Of her appreciation for the people of Harrisonburg, Mayor Reed said, "We are incredibly grateful for the numerous organizations, churches, businesses, and residents who stepped up to fill this need and protect the health and wellness of their neighbors in the Friendly City."

Mayor Deanna Reed continues her work to achieve diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the Harrisonburg community.

Read the [press release](#) and learn more about Harrisonburg's outstanding participation in the health equity pilot program.



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GUIDANCE AND RESOURCES

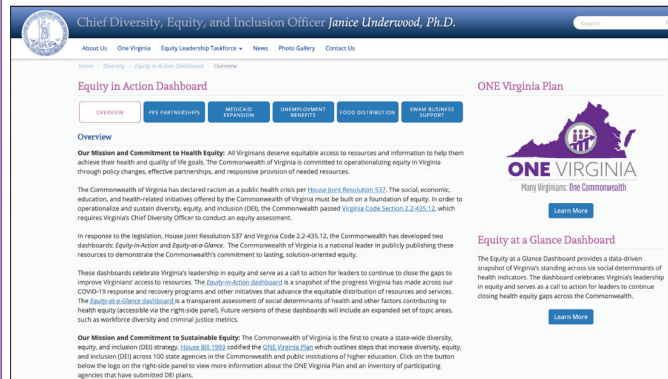
How does Virginia rank? The Equity Dashboards are a transparent assessment of health equity and resources within the Commonwealth.

The Equity Dashboards are a data-driven approach to operationalizing equity in the state by both measuring ways the state has provided resources during the COVID-19 public health emergency and across six key health equity topic areas: Income and Poverty, Education Attainment, Food Access, Unemployment, Broadband Access, and Housing Insecurity.

The Equity Dashboards, **Equity-in-Action** and **Equity-at-a-Glance**, are structured charts and tables representing a scorecard of equity and access to resources. Other states have published health equity dashboards that measure health outcomes, but Virginia is the first state that unapologetically focuses on social determinants of health. The unique aspects of the Virginia Health Equity Dashboards is that, in an unprecedented way, they coordinate data across various secretariats and agencies at the state level and across 133 localities to inform decision making and resource allocation.

The Equity-in-Action Dashboard:

A snapshot of the progress across Virginia's COVID-19 response and recovery programs and other initiatives that advance the equitable distribution of resources and services.



PPE Partnerships

Since the beginning of COVID-19, Virginia has distributed

1.9M
units of PPE

Medicaid Expansion

Since January 2020, the Medicaid Expansion program has had a net change in enrollment of

159.5K
members

Unemployment Benefits

Since January 2020, Virginia has provided

\$6.0B
total unemployment
benefits funding

Food Distribution

Since March 2020, Virginia has served

115.6M
total meals

SWaM Support

Since August 2020, Virginia's Rebuild VA Fund has funded

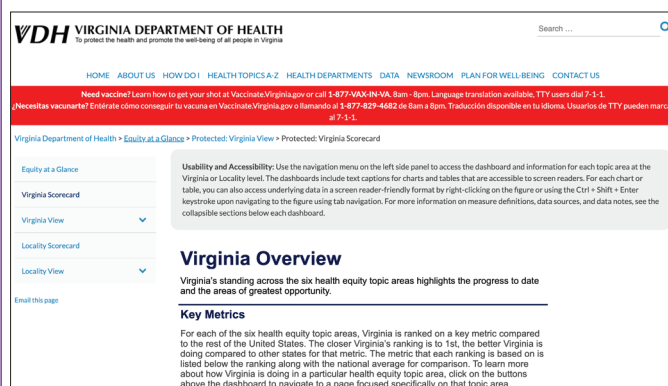
1,313
small businesses in low
income communities

Use the buttons at the top of the page to learn more about each of these initiatives and understand how Virginia is advancing health equity during COVID-19.

You can access more information on metric definitions, data sources, and data notes by clicking the collapsible sections below each dashboard window.

The Equity-at-a-Glance Dashboard:

A transparent assessment of social determinants of health and other factors contributing to health equity.



Virginia Overview

Virginia's standing across these six health equity topic areas highlights progress to date and areas of greatest opportunity.

Key Metrics

For each of the six health equity topic areas, Virginia is ranked on a key metric compared to the rest of the United States. The closer Virginia's ranking is to 1st, the better Virginia is doing compared to other states for that metric. The metric that each ranking is based on is listed below the ranking along with the national average for comparison. To learn more about how Virginia is doing in a particular health equity topic area, use the webpage menu to navigate to a page focused specifically on that topic area.

Income and Poverty

10th

10.6% of population living in poverty

13.4% national average

Educational Attainment

28th

89.7% of adults earned a High School Diploma

87.9% national average

Food Access

11th

18.1% of population with low access to food

19.5% national average

Unemployment

23rd

5.7% of labor force unemployed

6.8% national average

Broadband Access

17th

83.9% of households have access to broadband

82.7% national average

Housing Insecurity

25th

12.5% of households spend over half of income on housing

14.2% national average

The closer Virginia's ranking is to first, the better the Commonwealth is doing. Access more information on the six health equity topics for every country throughout the state.

Start using the [Equity-in-Action](#) and [Equity-at-a-Glance](#) Dashboards now.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS

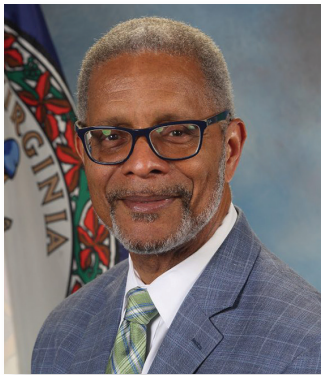
Meet the Equity Leadership Taskforce.

"We are able to take what a lot of people focus on as a theoretical aspect and [are] able to practically apply those lessons in real time."

Sable K. Nelson - Acting Director, Virginia Department of Health Office of Health Equity

In March 2020, the Commonwealth established the Equity Leadership Taskforce (ELT). The group is the first-of-its-kind in the nation dedicated to removing obstacles to equitable health care for all Virginians. The Commonwealth has declared racism a public health crisis and is taking intentional steps in combating it — a prime example of this is its efficient COVID-19 emergency response. The ELT has kept vulnerable communities top of mind since its inception and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future.

Introducing the ELT team members:



Dr. Norman Oliver

State Health Commissioner, Virginia Department of Health

Dr. Norman Oliver and Governor Northam worked together to establish the ELT. Over the course of his career, Dr. Oliver has worked with agencies and health care systems across the state to improve the health and well-being of all Virginians. He remains committed to a cross-agency and multisector approach to implementing population health initiatives. He and his team are working to improve racial and ethnic health disparities within the Commonwealth and developing effective interventions to reduce or eliminate them.



Curtis Brown

State Coordinator of Emergency Management at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM)

Curtis Brown, an expert in homeland security and emergency management policy, leads both the ELT and VDEM. He ensures both departments are intentional about prioritizing marginalized communities in the Commonwealth's COVID-19 emergency response. To date, millions of dollars in Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and more than seven million COVID-19 vaccines have been distributed statewide. Under Brown's leadership to address emergency response disparities, the Commonwealth will continue to diversify its emergency management. This will ensure communities that need help the most receive care and resources first.



Dr. Janice Underwood

Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Dr. Janice Underwood, the Virginia Chief Diversity Officer, leads the Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI). Together, her historic team addresses racial, ethnic, disability, gender-based, and cultural inequities in state government and in other public and private sectors. Specifically, Dr. Underwood and the ODEI work collaboratively across every secretariat and with more than 100 organizations to build the *ONE Virginia* mission, the first-ever statewide strategic plan that measures progress across five dimensions of inclusive excellence. In support of creating a statewide framework to foster equal opportunity, the ODEI contributes to 1) the creation of equity-related legislation; 2) policy reform for immigrant communities; 3) various equity assessments for state agencies; and 4) the implementation of equity principles in public messaging, crisis management, and long-term and sustainable community engagement. Dr. Underwood also leads the (now codified) Virginia Health Equity Task, which directs the work of the Unified Command Health Equity Working Group (HEWG). Her goal is to empower Virginians to make the state an exemplar for the nation regarding diversity, equity, and inclusive excellence.

INSPIRATIONAL THOUGHTS (CONTINUED)



Sable K. Nelson

Acting Director, Office of Equity and Inclusion, Virginia Department of Health

With Sable K. Nelson at the helm, The Office of Health Equity (OHE) at the Virginia Department of Health works within three divisions: social epidemiology, primary care and rural health, and multicultural health and community engagement. She and her team utilize tools and resources such as the Health Equity Dashboards to use data to operationalize equity statewide. The ELT and HEWG are objectively confronting and working to abolish racism in health care and across the Commonwealth.



Alaysia Black Hackett

Deputy Chief Diversity Officer

Alaysia Black Hackett has been appointed Deputy Chief Diversity Officer for the Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (ODEI). Ms. Hackett brings with her 20 years of executive-level diversity leadership in government and in public and private university settings. In this role as Deputy Chief Diversity Officer, Ms. Hackett will work with the Chief Diversity Officer across secretariats, state agencies, and all communities to advance equity reforms across state government and the Commonwealth.



Mona Siddiqui

Deputy Chief Diversity Officer and Senior Policy Advisor for the Office of New Americans

Mona Siddiqui works in support of the Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Health Equity Task Force to coordinate interagency efforts and remove systemic barriers preventing immigrants and refugees from fully accessing COVID-19 services and resources. She also provides policy expertise to the Office of New Americans and external stakeholders who support access, participation, and integration of immigrants and refugees in Virginia's workforce, educational systems, economy, and other relevant sectors.

This team of experts is doing groundbreaking work in our Commonwealth. See them in action [here](#).



Governor's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Subscribe to ONE Virginia News here: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/>

Download the ONE Virginia Plan here: <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/one-virginia/>

To contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, go to <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/diversity/contact-us>



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